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"THE BRONZE BELL" ✓

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SIX REELS ✓

"THE BRONZE BELL"

BY

LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

David Amber is on his way to visit, after a long absence, his friend Quain, a wealthy sportsman, who lives in an unfrequented part of Long Island. There being no car to meet him, he starts to walk. He hears a woman's scream and rushing to the spot discovers a beautiful young woman, confronted by a huge Bengali Babu. The Babu, who introduces himself as Khatterji, disclaims any intention of harming the girl, and is dismissed by Amber, who discovers that the girl is Sophia Farrell, daughter of an old friend, and who is at present staying with Quain, but is due to leave on the morrow to rejoin her father in India. Before leaving, the Hindu has given Amber, whom he addresses as Rutton, with a high sounding title, a small box, together with a mysterious message. Next day, after Sophia has left, Amber and Quain go duck hunting, and during a storm become separated. Amber is lost and finds his way to a deserted camp, which he finds occupied by an old friend, Rutton, who greatly resembles himself, but about whom he knows little. Rutton tells him that he is in grave personal danger should he be found by persons who are looking for him, but he will not explain exactly what the danger is.

Later that evening the Babu arrives and presents Rutton with the same box he had given Amber, having subsequently stolen it back on discovering that he had given it to the wrong man. He also gives him the message, which is a call to some mission. Rutton accepts the token but tells the Hindu that he refuses the mission. The Babu, after threatening dire penalties in the event of Rutton's refusal, leaves. Rutton follows and kills him. Later that night he discovers that the Hindu has a companion and that his precaution has been in vain, and that he will not be able to escape the penalty. He then swears Amber to a compact which is to go at once to India and bring Sophia, who is his daughter, safely home. He gives Amber the token, which is a huge emerald set in a ring. Then he kills himself with a subtle poison.

Among the instructions received by Amber he finds the name of Labertouche, to whom he is to go in Calcutta, and who will help him. On the way to India, Amber discovers that he is watched, and a photograph of Sophia is stolen from him. Arriving in Calcutta, he finds Labertouche, who is a member of the Secret Service, who is able to disguise and pass as a native. He tells Amber that a tremendous revolt is brewing in India, and that the natives are only waiting for an appointed leader. Promised to secrecy, Amber does not tell him of Rutton.

While in search of an old servant of Rutton's, Amber falls into a trap and is captured by Singh, who is Maharani of Khandawar. Singh thinks at first that Amber is Rutton, who in reality was Har Dyal Rutton, Maharani of Khandawar, who had abdicated rather than lead the revolt against English rule; Singh having been placed on the throne till he should return. The time for the revolt having arrived, Rutton had been called, and Singh, having been forced to comply with the demands of the rebels, had agreed to bring him back. Singh soon discovers that Amber is not Rutton, despite the likeness, but determines to use him. He knows he will not be able to stand the Ordeal, and will be sacrificed, thus making clear Singh's permanent tenure of the throne.

Singh invited Amber to the "Gateway of Swords", to hear the call of the Bell. Amber, learning that Sophia has gone to Darjheeling to join her father, starts thither, but on the way gets an urgent message from Labertouche to go to Benares, but before arriving there, he receives another message sending him on to Kattarpur, the capital of Khandawar. He goes thither, travelling on the last stage with Sophia, whose father is in Kattarpur in charge of English troops.

Amber is decoyed to the Royal Palace by Singh, who sends him the stolen photograph of Sophia as a bait. At the palace he is met by a beautiful woman - Naraini, who claims to be his wife. She tries her best to seduce him into taking up the throne again, and when he denies that he is Rutton, she tells him that it does not matter, as she loves him. He spurns her and returns to the town, where he learns from Farrell that Sophia has disappeared. He discovers that Sophia has been taken across the lake to the palace, and the native who gives him the information offers to take him across also. Again he is trapped by Singh and taken to the Temple of the Bell to undergo the Ordeal.

In the meantime, Farrell has called out his soldiers, and an attack is made on the palace. Just as Amber is about to meet death at the fangs of a huge cobra, the palace is stormed and he escapes in the confusion and goes in search of Sophia. He finds her, but is in turn found by Naraini, who, declaring Sophia, her sister, has stood in her way long enough, attempts to stab her. Amber seizes her before she can carry out her plan, and is himself stabbed.

In the meantime, Singh has been killed, and almost all of the active leaders of the revolt captured. Amber is taken away and nursed by Sophia. He recovers, then learns what has happened, and that Naraini and not Sophia is Rutton's daughter.

Needless to say, Sophia and Amber have long since learned that they love each other, and the story culminates in their marriage.

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